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THE
IMMORTAL-MORTAL,
A
SERMON

Preached at the
Triennial VISITATION of the Right Reverend the
Lord BISHOP of LINCOLN.

By the Reverend Mr. WHATLEY, Rector of
Toft near *Lincoln*, and Prebendary of *York*.

THE SECOND EDITION.

To which is prefixed,
A new PREFACE, suited to the present most melancholly
Occasion.

*O hebetudo & duritia cordis humani, quod solum Præsentia
meditatur, & Futura non magis prævidet!*

A Kempis, Lib. i. Ch. xxiii.

—*Quam diu hæc curaturi sumus?* Cic. ad Att. Lib. xii. Ep. xii.

I believe the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life everlasting.

Apost. Creed.

*I look for the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life of the
World to come.*

Nicene Creed.

Here have we no continuing City, but we seek one to come.

Heb. xiii. 14.

L O N D O N:

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IMMORTAL-MORTAL

A

SERMON

PREACHED

AT THE REQUEST OF THE FARMERS

AND FARMERS OF LIVING

BY THE REV. J. W. WALKER, D.D.

OF THE CHURCH OF LIVING

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AND CORRECTED

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P R E F A C E

T O T H I S S E C O N D E D I T I O N .

A DISCOURSE *on the Subject of This I here present the Reader with, a second Time, should always be welcome. The Subject is agreeable and entertaining at all Times, to Persons of the least Reflection, and should be so to an unthinking WORLD at a Season, where there has been so sudden, so unexpected, and so interesting a Catastrophe of all that is Great, as now lies DEAD before Us.— A human BEING, How Great! How Illustrious! a few Days since; How Mean! How Low! at present—If NO Immortality belongs to our Nature, or, if that Immortality was bestowed on any Condition requisite NOT fulfill'd!*

On the contrary. How Little! whilst Living, in all his Glory, and How Great! now Dead, If the temporary transient Scene be only closed, and the
Eternal

P R E F A C E.

Eternal one opened, and entred on, and through the Mercy of GOD (who knows the Heart, and considers every Circumstance incident to his Creatures, that possibly can be so, in their Favour) The Condition on which a happy Immortality is to be obtain'd, fulfill'd!

It is not for Us to presume to decide Either way, in any Case. To hope for the best is our Duty in all. And where, all Things considered, we have the least Glimmering of comfortable Hope, nothing forbids us to entertain 'it. It may not however, be amiss to observe, For the sake of all Living GREATNESS of what Sort or Degree soever, "That Men may "live Princes, but Princes must die Men."

But who is there that has on this most sorrowful Occasion pursued the illustrious Shade to his Grave, without a serious Reflection, "What a trifling Distinction it is to be placed in the most elevated Rank of human Nature, and so down through all the subordinate Degrees of Grandeur, if Nothing is beyond it, and human Mortality is not to be swallowed up of Angelic Life?—And that, If there be something beyond the Grave, and it be certain that human Nature is, however little thought on, however little lived to, what my Title Speaks,

Mortally - I M M O R T A L

Of what Consequence it must be for the highest Personages to cultivate it in their Thoughts, to glory in it——(my Pen was running on to say,—To value it ABOVE all human Distinctions,—
but

P R E F A C E.

but what Room for Comparison? — The Subject disdains it, —) and to prepare for it accordingly, as well as the Meanest of the People.

Of what intrinsic Value can the Possession be of a CROWN, a Coronet, a Title, or a Ribbon, Beauty, or Splendor of any Kind, in the Hands of a dying Mortal, but as it inspires the Possessors of them with a Desire and an Elevation of Mind towards the acquiring of as eminent Rank and Distinction in the Regions of IMMORTALITY? For there are Degrees of GLORY, no Doubt, throughout the whole Creation of GOD, in Heaven, as well as on Earth.—How short-lived the One, how lasting the Other!

What a Precipice Human Life stands on to Great and Little alike, How unexpectedly a sudden Gust of Wind may rise, and blow us down, we have had shewn us in the most eminent Instance that could be given,

But ONE.

— May the infinite Mercy of GOD long preserve that ONE among us to a hoary old Age, in all Health and Happiness; and may a recollecting Use be made of the present grievous Calamity in all Orders and Degrees of Men and Women, by moderating that prevailing Run of constant Dissipation, vain Amusement, and criminal Pleasure, to the utter Neglect of all that is Sacred and Praise-worthy, and so by a timely Reformation, draw down from Heaven this INESTIMABLE BLESSING!

Little Ryder-street
March 25, 1751.

R. W.

Speedily will be published,
SELF-ENTERTAINMENT,

O R

DAD THOUGHTS;

Being a Collection of six Months occasional
Reflections, set down as they occurred
to the Writer's Mind.

————— *Neque cum Me Læſulus aut Me*
Porticus excepit deſum mihi — *Hæc Ego Mecum,*
H O R

————— Thought following Thought —————
MILT. Par. Reg. B. I. l. 192.

TO THE
MOST REVEREND,

THE
Lord Archbishop of CANTERBURY,
PRIMATE of all ENGLAND, and
METROPOLITAN.

MY LORD,

THE Grandeur of the Subject of
the following *Discourse* must alone
bear me out in my Presumption
of placing your *Grace's* great Name
at the Head of it. *Kings* and *Emperors* are
only *Great*, as they are *mortally-immortal*.
And only *wise* as they take *Eternity* into
Consideration, and are *influenced* by the
B *Weight*

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Weight of it. And what, my Lord, I am sure you would not censure in your *eternal* State, I flatter myself I may be easy, what may be your *Grace's* Sentiments of it, in your *temporal* Capacity. And therefore it is not without a decent Boldness that I appear before you on this Occasion, and lay the ensuing Discourse, mean as it is, and unworthy any other Patronage but *my own*, most humbly at your *Grace's* Feet.

—An *Occasion*, however, I had, perhaps, never been sensible of, and a Subject I had never indulged my Thoughts so much upon, had I not retained and carried about with me the divine Influence I have often, of old, been animated with from your most superlative Manner of *Preaching*. Your *Discourse*, in particular, “*On our Conversation in Heaven*,” will be my Entertainment in Heaven itself, when I question not I shall find that State, as you represented it, as I am comparing *both* together in the full Enjoyment of it, whilst I am conscious to myself of having attained it, by following the Rules and Encouragements for that Purpose, delivered therein, — recommended with a *Spirit* that seemed to be in Possession of the Joy they led to, — “The true “*Christian Eloquence*,”—and which by a
na-

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natural Assimilation, could not fail to make the Impression irresistible, where there was ever so little opening of the Heart of the *Hearer* to receive it.

The Truth is, I am so much in Love with the Subject of the ensuing Discourse, and have so much Compassion to see an HEIR of so GREAT an INHERITANCE, so little affected with any proportionate Sense of the *Distinction* of it (as is the Case with *our* Christian World almost universally as far as I know it) That I was willing it should have *all* the Weight given it I could possibly procure.—The telling the World it is a Subject *your Grace* delights in beyond all the Grandeur you are in Possession of—That your *present* high Station is nothing to you, but as it affords you Means of *distinguishing* yourself to *all Eternity*, and that it was not without the greatest Reluctance you acquiesced in taking it upon you, as you would have thereby fewer Opportunities, and less Leisure to cultivate the Contemplation of the *glorious* and *everlasting Inheritance* referred to, before-hand, and, perhaps, in your own private Mind be exposed to more Hazard in obtaining it, —is Credit given to my *Discourse*, and no Flattery towards *your Grace*, because every

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one who has the Honour to know you, knows it to be presumptively or absolutely true.

MY LORD,

I am at a Loss to say, Whether it is greater *Folly* not to be persuaded of a *future eternal Existence*, on the Evidence we have for it, or greater *Madness*, where it is acknowledged, not to be captivated with the Thoughts of it, so as almost to think of nothing else, but with great Indifference, any further than *Duty* shall require, and the *rising to Glory* recommend it. The Evidence for a future State of Being for human Nature is so strong, from the natural Light and hereditary Prepossession of it in the Minds of Men, that I am above Measure surpris'd that Mankind, in general, have not in all Ages taken it more effectually into their Thoughts, and *enjoyed* it, by Anticipation, as their *greatest Good*, and as they are apt to do every inferior Sort of Happiness, in prospect, before-hand, e'er they arrive at it.—But when I think on the Neglect of this in the *Christian Church*, and *its* preferring the engaging itself, in all Ages, in Disputes and Contentions about Opinions in abstruse Matters (of no Consequence to have cleared up at all, if our Religion be *not* true and purpose-

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purposely left obscure because of little or none to *us* to have clear Apprehensions of, if it *be*) instead of opening, one and all, in the Cry of *eternal* Life *before* them, and preparing themselves with the utmost Circumspection for the Enjoyment of it—I cannot sufficiently express my Admiration.—There are *two* Parts plainly to me in our Salvation from the Grave,—God's Part and *Ours*, *Christ's* Part therein is of God's Appointment, and *one* Part of his Plan in reversing our Attainder. *Ours* is “receiving his *Authority*, and *acting* under it, as his *Disciples* and *Followers* in the happy Expectation of it. And who can refuse the doing the *One*, or being the *Other*, that have ever given Entertainment in their Minds to the Holiness of his Precepts; or what it is to be *entitled* to a *Resurrection* of the *Dead*, and the Enjoyment of eternal Life in Company with the glorious *Satrapæ* of the invisible *World*? † *Life* and *Immortality*, or immortal Life bestowed on Mankind, from the good Pleasure of God, through CHRIST, on Repentance *after* Transgression, no less than on the most per-

†—What Proof need there be for so pleasing a Delusion, if it be one, what Evidence can be greater than that which a considerate Mind has for the Truth of it?

fect,

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fect Obedience, had we continued in it, *without HIM*, were the *glad Tidings* published by *Christ* and his *Apostles*. And it is expressly told us, *That the raising up Jesus again*, as the Forerunner of our own Resurrection, *was the fulfilling the Promises made to the Fathers—That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the First that should rise from the Dead, and should shew Light unto the People, and to the Gentiles,—and that as with Adam, all die, so with Christ, shall all be made alive,—*with multitude of other Passages of like Import. And the *first* Christians receiving Christianity on this footing, saw it in so strong a Light, that as *Minutius Felix* observes, “*They talked of it with that Assurance as if they were already RISEN.*—And what has it been owing to, that the same *glad Tidings* have not had the same happy Effect on the Minds of *Christians* in all succeeding Ages, but to the *literary* Attention paid to so many impertinent and vain Schemings of the human Mind in our holy Religion? Like the *Dog* in the *Fable*, Christians, from the early Ages of the Church, have sacrificed the *Substance* to the *Shadow*. And Pride of Opinion among humble Christian Divines has done more Mischief in the *Christian Church* than all the carnal Pride of Princes
put

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put together in the *open World*.—Thus *Christianity* has been made to consist in *No Body* knows what, instead of the *plain Promise* that runs through the whole Records of it, of *eternal Life*, (by the Will of God, through CHRIST, in a Sense and for a Reason known to *Himself* only,) *To those who believing in him, by patient Continuance in well-doing, shall seek for it* ||.

We are, by the same presumptuous Means, whilst our Attention is diverted into mysterious concealed Channels, abridged of the highest Enjoyment to be had even in this Life, which most certainly consists in cultivating the comfortable Hope, not to say, Assurance, in a Degree, of a *blessed Immortality*. Nothing *pays* any Man for living in

|| I cannot omit entering here a Passage, the learned Reader may find, in the original, writ in GROTIUS's *Vote for the Peace of the Church*.—"Of the *Righteousness of Christ*, imputed to us, as if we had performed it all; and of *Faith*, whose Office it is to embrace that Righteousness so imputed, there is not one Word in the sacred Letters.—That Faith which is so much commended is *this*, whereby we believe Christ to have suffered, died, and risen again from the Dead; and therefore, those Things to be *true*, which he brought us in God's Name, either by Way of Precept or Promise. Mean while it is true, that God *forgives* them, who are purged from Vices, their *former Crimes*, and *that* he doth for *Christ* his Sake.—

this

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this World, nor was ever designed to do so. It is something to *come* that must do it. The most successful Pursuits of Avarice, Ambition, or sensual Pleasure, fail in the *Reward*. And so does no less the *Variety* of *Dissipations* so much in Vogue in our Age, for both Sexes, refine them ever so much; they leave an Emptiness in the Mind, which nothing in *Time*, or belonging to it, can fill up.—It must be *Self-Acquaintance* and *Eternity* alone that can do it.

Nor is there any thing at all *surprising* in the Donation, Promise, or Expectation of it for human Nature. There is infinitely more Room in the *Universe*, the great House of God, than is yet stocked with Inhabitants. God may spend a whole Eternity in Creation, and yet find in Infinitude *Place* to put his Creatures in. And why should not some of those spacious Apartments be for the more commodious Dwelling of such of the human Race as shall render themselves, under *Christ*, worthy of them by a right Use of their present miscellaneous Being, as well as by any other *Species* of *Creatures*? And why should there not be *Nurseries* first, and afterwards *Plantations-out* of *thriving* Plants, and those that are

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are not so *thrown aside*, of rational Creatures made by God, as well as of the vegetable World made by *Man*? This seems highly analogous. There is nothing more surprising in this than there ought to be at our present *Mode of Existence*. My *present Existence* is to me a greater *Novelty* than I can conceive any future *Variation* of it can possibly be. I come *now*, out of *Nothing*, into *Being*. Hereafter, I shall have it *varied* from what it now is.—*Which* of these two Conditions requires greater Power in the *High CAUSE*? *which* most surprise in the *Subject* of *Both*?—And this would appear so to every thinking Person, would we allow ourselves to look a little at what we *possess* by Virtue of our *Being*, before we immersed ourselves in the *Use* of it, and were not apt to take a Thing to be *of Course*, from the gradual Manner in which we become sensible of it, instead of viewing it by itself in its *native* and primæval *Novelty*.

I humbly drop this, here, because I do believe that a latent Apprehension of its being something *more* extraordinary, too extraordinary for even *God* to do himself, to remove us hence, and bring us back again into *New Heavens*, and a *New Earth*, weakens often the Assurance, and some-

x DEDICATION.

times even gets the better in many serious Peoples Minds, of all the superlative Evidence for it.

I am of Opinion, my Lord, there is very little real *Infidelity* in the World; but a Sort of *negative* Belief of a *Hereafter*, through Incogitancy, Carelessness, or wrong random Thought, I do believe is very prevalent. I do not call that Infidelity that is downright *Ignorance* and *Stupidity*. For a Man to be an *Infidel* with any Credit or Character, he must be a studious serious Person, The best of Men may be mistaken in their rational Deductions. We are made *liable* to Error in the most interesting as well as the most trifling Occasions. And no Man can command or account for *another's* Understanding. — But if either *Infidel* or *Believer* will not make use of his rational Faculties, *determinately*, they are *neither* what they pretend to be, otherwise than in *Name* only.

Man is only what he *thinks*.—God himself is only *so*. Angels and all created Beings of the most *superlative* as well as of the *lowest* Intellectuality. If we think of *Nothing*, or of nothing but *Trifles*, we are *Nothing*, or but *Triflers*. If *sensual Pleasures*
en-

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engross our Thoughts we are *Brutes*.—If a Spirit of Malice, Hatred and Oppression, reigns within us, we are *Devils*.—If the *Great Things* of Nature, Duty and Expectation, occupy our Reflection, we must be *Great* too.

The *End* of the following *Discourse*, my Lord, is to encrease this *Greatness*, and to make it more in *vogue* than it is at present.—That the *Splendor* of a *Ridotto* (or an *Assembly*) may put a *fine Christian Lady* in mind of the *GLORY* of the *Heavenly JERUSALEM*, and of the *Rottenness* of all meer human Enjoyments at the same Time. And that the *pretty Gentleman*, and even *vulgar Man* of our Age, may think of something else than what they seemingly make their usual Occupation, — “may be led to value themselves on their Title to *Immortality*.” And when once this gets Possession of their Thoughts, we shall soon see the *bappy Fruits* of it. For who will not chuse to live for *Eternity*, when once they have possessed their Minds with their Title to it? — Who will not be for anticipating their Joy in possessing it, by that which alone can give it—a Life of *Virtue* and *Holiness*?

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If any Thing ever reclaims our World from that most miserable Condition under which it labours, as to all Sense of the proper Dignity of human Nature, it must be by *lowering* the Credit and Estimation of the Honours, Riches, and unworthy Pleasures of the present transitory Scene, and opening to our View the more solid and durable Satisfaction of *Futurity*.

There is nothing disturbs the Order of the *World* like to the *Disparity* of Condition of human Nature in it.—But of what Account is any temporary Duration of Circumstances of any Sort to mortally-immortal Beings, to whom *Heaven* and *eternal Happiness* shall equally lie open? For, if in the *bighest* Prosperity, and *lowest* Adversity, I can *alike* become entitled to a happy Eternity—any *Difference* of Condition in ever so large a Portion of temporary Continuance, much more in *our* momentary Space, must be what the *Mathematicians* call an *Infiniteſimal*, only, in an eternal Duration, and be really of *no* Account.—This *levels* the Dealings of Providence with the greatest *Monarch*, and the meanest *Subject*,—by your *Grace's* leave, with a *Metropolitan, Primate*

DEDICATION. xiii

Primate of all England, and a —shire Curate.

MY LORD,

In stating this so *clearly* I should be apt to think were I writing to any *Other*, in your *Grace's* high *Station*, that I was but ill making my Court to him in *thus* degrading it. But I am in no pain when addressing your *Grace* of any such *Construction*, while in doing so I exalt the Interests and recommend the Consideration of our common Eternity.

I have the Honour to be, with the profoundest Submission and greatest Sincerity ;

May it please your GRACE,

YOUR GRACE's

Most dutiful Son,

and most humble and most

obedient Servant,

ROBERT WHATLEY.

DEDICATION

Patrons of all England and a ————

My Lord,
In stating this to you I should be apt
to think were I writing to any other, in
your Grace's high station, that I was but
ill making my Court to him in thus deprecating
it. But I am in no pain when address-
ing your Grace of any such Courtship,
while in doing so I exalt the interests and
recommend the Consideration of our com-
mon Eternity.

I have the Honour to be, with the pro-
foundest Submission and greatest Sincerity,

Very I beg your Grace,

Yours GRACE

Most humble Son,

and most devoted Son,

of the same Son,

ROBERT WHATELY

IMMORTAL-MORTAL.

Deuter. xxxii. 29.

Oh that they were wise, that they understood this,

"That they would consider their LATTER

"END."

THESE Words, in their *general* Meaning, are of that Importance to a rational Being, and that *Meaning* is so plain and obvious, as to make it impossible they should not excite a serious Recollection in the Mind of every one that reads them, or hears them repeated.—Nor do I know any Passage in the whole *Bible*, more suitable to the *present* (in itself, and as it ought to be understood) very *great* Occasion. An *Occasion* in its Rise and Origin, of the highest Consequence to the Well-being of the *Church of Christ* in this Kingdom; though now, alas! (as is the Course of Things in this World long used and continued in) labouring under the Emptiness of Form rather than the Weight of its *original* Usefulness.—Nor can I conceive any thing can be more the Duty of the appointed *Preacher* than to press the *Contents* of them to his *combined* Audience.

Foy

For which Reason, and to give the greater Force to what I have in my Thoughts to lay before you from them, in consequence of the Duty enjoined me, and thereby as far as in me lieth to render more efficacious his Lordship's, our Right Reverend Diocesan's, more peculiar and most worthy Endeavours to make our public Attendance on him here, turn to greater Account—May I be permitted (and may I have your favourable Attention while I do so) to lay before, and remind you somewhat of, “*The Nature and End of this present Solemnity.*”

So many of the *Ministers of the Established Church*, with the *Representatives* of their several *Congregations*, as can be conveniently called together within the Limits of *one District*, are here assembled under the invisible Eye of *Jesus Christ*, our common *Lord and Master*, and in the immediate Presence of his visible *Delegate*, to give respectively an Account of our *Stewardships*.

It is a prevailing Error, my *Brethren of the Laity*, to consider a *Visitation* only or chiefly concerning the *Clergy*. Whereas you are in Truth *visited* as well—I may say more (as you infinitely exceed us in Number) than *we*; though in some Sense on a different Account. *We of the Clergy* are visited chiefly by way of Enquiry, “How we discharge our *pastoral Duty* towards you, as *Ministers of Christ's Holy Religion*, and as the *Diocesan's Delegates* in the Church of England?”—For it was never imagined in the first Institution of the Church's sacred *Oeconomy*, that *Those* who with so great Deliberation, and in so solemn a Manner, as accompanies the repeated Ordination of every one of our *sacred Body*, should be *ourselves* notoriously defective in the Practice of those *Holy Rules of Life*, which we had so solemnly taken upon us to recommend by *Example* as well as *Precept* to others.—But you, my Brethren of the Laity, are visited, expressly, and for no other Purpose but “*how you observe them?*”—A Method is laid down by our Ecclesiastical Constitution for the *Bishop* of your *Diocese* to be informed of every one of your *Lives and Conversations*.—Whether they are, or

are *not*, what they should be, suitable to the holy Religion you have *taken* the *Profession*, and bear the *Name* of—Whether such or no as *becometh* the *Gospel* of *Christ*? And were not a Matter of the most sacred Appointment by length of Time, and Corruption of the World defeated of its original Intent—*This* on the respective *Returns* of *Enquiry* into them, would appear to the proper Christian Officer to take Cognizance of.

The Business of *Confirmation* that usually attends a *Visitation* is no Part of it. And is only made at any Time to accompany it for the greater Ease of both the *Bishop* and his *Diocese*, and to give a greater Solemnity to the *One*, by the Presence of the *Other*.

Confirmation is a *Means*, and a very proper one, of *raising* a *Christian Church*, but the *Visitation* is to enquire whether it be actually *raised*? Whether a *Community* of *Christians* be *Christians* in *Deed* or in *Name* only?—

This was the original Purpose of *Episcopal* and subordinate *Archidiaconal* *Visitation*.—For the *Archdeacon* being the *Representative* of the *Bishop*, as the *Bishop* is of *Christ*, his *Visitation* should be a Solemnity little inferior to that of the *Bishop* itself.

The *Church* of *England* (an Ecclesiastical Government, unquestionably in its original Institution of the wisest Contrivance,) has the Misfortune to suffer more by its *Friends* than by its *Foes*. Whilst Custom and Negligence have suffered some of its greatest Excellencies, and most worthy Institutions, to be practised in an overly Manner, instead of the serious Solemnity and Exactness they ought on all Sides to be attended with.—What could rejoice the Angels in Heaven more than to see such a *religious Constitution* of a *Christian Kingdom*, where the Inhabitants of it should be twice in a Year gone over by a *Bishop's* sacred *Delegate*, to enquire into the Care and Diligence of their respective *Substitutes*, and into the *Lives* and *Manners* of those committed to their Care, and every *third* Year an *Examination* taken in the same Manner, and for the same End by the *Bishop* himself? Surely these Heavenly Beings would say to themselves, “There are *Saints* on Earth as well as *Angels*”

4 *The IMMORTAL-MORTAL.*

in Heaven." And every true Christian is a *Saint*—a Name not peculiar to a *Peter*, or a *Paul*, or any other of our *Saviour's* Apostles, or their more immediate Successors in the first Ages of the Church, but of every one who *professed* himself a *Christian*, and who lived *accordingly*. The Word *Saint*, in its original and true Meaning being only another Word for *holy*—The *proper* Character of a Christian. Nor was it ever designed by the *divine Founder* of our Religion, that it should be separated from it. However fatally and unfortunately it has been so in *succeeding* Ages. And too melancholily is seen to be so, in *our own*.

And now what was all this *divine Appointment*, (as I may truly term it, though made by *Man*) in our Church for?—We read not of it in the sacred Records of our Religion, in particular, only in general, "That the "*Apostles* went about visiting and confirming the "*Churches*." The Thing in itself is undoubtedly of the *Essence* of the Christian Church. The Form, as to *Time* and *Place* and *Manner*, of *Man's* framing. And how wise a *Frame* it is to answer the End of the very Being of a *Christian Community* must be visible to every one that hears me, as I mention it, or reflects upon it.

All we who are, here, met together in the Presence of our *Spiritual Governor*, both *Clergy* and *Laity*, and all that we have *left at home* behind us in our respective Parishes, that shall not be *presented* for some sort of *Misdemeanor* inconsistent with the Christian Name and Character, are SUPPOSED (as far as the human Eye can discern, or Charity dictate,) to be *Christians* indeed.—The *State* of our respective *Churches* in the Buildings and Furniture, the Condition of *our* Dwellings and Incomes are *subsidiary* Articles only to the main *Enquiry* of the Christian *Conversation*, so incumbent on all of us, and *otherwise* of no Importance but as the Support of each of these for the Honour of Almighty God conduces thereto.

Those that are *Delinquents* are *presented* for their *Admonition* and *Correction*. And if that will not reform them, for their *Rejection* and *Dismission* out of the Christian

Christian Church, till due *Repentance* and *Reformation* give them a Title to a *Readmission* into it.

The *Christian Church* in general, and that of the *Church of England* in particular, is a *Society* professing the Doctrine, and acknowledging Subjection to the *Law of Christ*, in consequence of our having chosen *him* for our *Master*, under God, and *Ruler* of our *Lives* and *Actions*. In hopes of reversing the sad *Sentence*, incident to human Nature, of *Death*, and of attaining a *Resurrection* from the *Dead*, and *ETERNAL LIFE*, through the *Promises* of God by *Him*, and on the *Conditions* God through *Him* has offered it.

The *Performance* of these *Conditions* we, as *Christians*, have all of us, first taken upon us by our *Proxys* at *Baptism*, have been *instructed* in as soon as we came to Years of Discretion, and have at *Confirmation* (where Confirmation has been had and is known what it is) solemnly and *knowingly* taken the Profession of on ourselves. (—And for which reason *Confirmation* ought never to be desired, till the *Party* be so far a grown Christian as to understand what the *Obligations* are it takes on itself, and enters into by Virtue of being such—). And as soon as conveniently may be after it, are understood to have joined ourselves publicly and professedly to a Christian Congregation, in the highest and most solemn Act of our Holy Religion, “The
“ commemorating the Death of our *divine Master*, in
“ hopes of becoming Partakers of the *Benefits* of it, by
“ approving ourselves his *faithful Disciples*.”

This is the *Kingdom* of GOD, or the *Kingdom* of Heaven, which *Christ* came to erect in the Minds of Men, by *dethroning* the *Devil* from the Empire he but too naturally and too easily obtains over the *Children* of *Disobedience*.—And the *Promises* of *eternal Life*, and the *Threats* of *everlasting Punishment* together with the present *Complacency* of *Mind*, and anticipated *heavenly Joy*, a *TRULY virtuous Life* and *Conversation* never fails to bring with it, and the *inward Darkness* and *Uneasiness* a vicious Course of Life is always more or less clouded with — are the invariable and immutable *Sanctions* by

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by which he cooperates with the Freedom of the human Mind to bring Men into Subjection to it.——

—— “The LORD JESUS” (says that great Apostle St. Paul) “shall be revealed from Heaven with his
“mighty Angels, in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance
“on them that *know* not God, and that *obey* not the
“Gospel of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who shall be punished
“with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of
“the Lord, and from his glorious Power (1)”——
and, on the contrary, he expressly assures us, “That
“the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a
“Shout, with the Voice of the *Archangel*, and with
“the Trump of God, and the *Dead in Christ* shall rise
“first,” when those who are of the *same happy Character*, and
“then *alive* shall be caught up together with
“them in the Clouds to meet the Lord in the Air, and
“so shall *ever* be with the Lord (2).”—— Thus that
great Apostle.—— And not wholly to omit our Saviour’s own *Representation* of this tremendously noble *Issue of Things*, and great *Latter End* that belongs to our Nature—— “The Son of *Man* shall come in his Glory,
“and all the holy Angels with him, then shall he sit
“on the Throne of his Glory, and before him shall be
“gathered all Nations, and he shall separate them one
“from another, on the right Hand and on the left,
“and shall say to them on his *right Hand*, *Come*, Ye
“Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared
“for you from the Foundation of the World.—— After
“this, he shall say unto them on his *left Hand*, *Depart*
“from me, Ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared
“for the Devil and his Angels.—— When *these* shall
“go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into *Life eternal* (3).”

And now if this is to be the *latter* and LAST End of the *Christian* either in Name or in Reality,—— If one or the other of these two EXTREMITIES of our present uncertain short-lived Existence, by the very Profession we hold, and under the Character of our holding which

(1) 2 Thes. i. 7, 8, 9. (2) 1 Thes. iv. 16. (3) Mat. xxv. 31, 32, 34, 41, 46.

we all, here, *Laity* and *Clergy* alike, make our Appearance, and if every Step that is taken in the Exercise of the Discipline or Government of our Church be in order to facilitate the attaining *one* of these *Extremities*, and of avoiding the *other*; nay, if every *Sermon* that is made, or *Prayer* offered up, be for no *other* End—— Can there be a *Subject* more suitable for the *Occasion* of our *present Meeting* than to excite ALL to a due Consideration of it——? Can I go before you in expressing your Sentiments thereon? Or, are you not all before me in your Ejaculations to yourselves in the Words of my Text?

Oh that we may be so wise as to understand this, "To consider our Latter End!"

And will allow me to take the Words I have read to you out of the Mouth of *Moses*, and put them into the Mouth of *Christ*, the *Master* whom *we* serve, as "inviting us all to the most serious *Consideration* of it." To awaken us all out of the spiritual Lethargy we may any of us be in, and to clear up those Fogs and Clouds that by the Delusion of the World, the Deceitfulness of Sin, and the Treacherousness of our own Hearts, may lie between our rational Discernment and so GREAT an OBJECT. And to do what in me lies to excite in us *All*, here assembled, a Care and a Solicitude in our respective *Stations* and *Stewardships* worthy of so great, so important a *Concern*.

—— "Oh that Men were wise, that they understood this—— That they would *consider* their *Latter End*."

What an END is here, *thus* understood, for Wisdom to point out, and for Consideration to prosecute without Delay, and without Intermision!

The *Words* in the Manner of their Expression may be supposed manifestly to imply *two* Things, *viz.*

1. "That nothing is or can be of such Importance to us as the *Consideration* of our *latter End*."

2. "That a due Consideration of this important *Point* is liable to be too generally *neglected*."—— They may be said to contain both an *Invitation* and a *Reproach*; the

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the *one* to do what they press us to, the *other* reproving us for *not* doing it. For when we express ourselves, at any Time in this Manner. "Oh that such a Thing was done!" We do not imply merely an *Earnestness* of *Desire* to have it performed, but insinuate at the same Time, a Degree of Apprehension that it was, or would be neglected.

And this is the *Use* I shall make of them. *First*, To shew that the due and effectual *Consideration* of the Christian's *latter End*, is greatly neglected, in the *Age we live* —

Secondly, That it is the highest Wisdom in us all to have ever before our Eyes our *genuine Latter End*, as the *prime* and *principal* Concern of our Lives. Making every other Intention of Mind and Occupation of Body subservient to it, or to be ever within the Limits of such *Consideration*.

First, I am to shew, "That the due and effectual "Consideration of our *latter End* is greatly neglected in the *Age we live*."

That *this Life* is to be taken from us, that it is short at most, and uncertain at best, is notorious to *all Men*. — That it is only introductory to *another* more real, and everlasting *State of Being*, like the *Preface* to a *Book*, or the *Porch* to a *Building*, has ever been the Opinion of the *wisest* of *Men* in all Ages. — That *after* an End is put to Life, and our Bodies are mouldered into the common Dust from whence they sprung, *Mortality is to be swallowed up of Life* (1). — They are to be raised again, and the *whole* Man reassumed, and every human Inhabitant of this Globe disposed of to all *Eternity* — Those that have *done Good* to the Resurrection of *eternal Life*, and those that have *done Evil* to the Resurrection of *Damnation* (2) — Is the *Faith* of a *Christian*. —

And when this is the *Case* with us all without Exception, need I mention after what has been already said,

(1) 2 Cor. v. 4.

(2) John. v. 29. Mat. xxv. 45, &c. &c.

the *Inference*,—"How much it becomes us all to "have *both* these *Issues* of Life ever before our Eyes?" Or can a Man be a Friend to human Nature, or have the least Tincture of Benevolence in him, not to lament the little Concern there is about them?

If it were not manifestly contradicted by all Observation, one would think it impossible that *this* should be the Case.—That a Creature endowed with Reason, that had these *two* great *Ends* of Life laid clearly before him, and admitted the Truth of them, together with the *holy Dispositions* the acquiring, or the neglecting of which, in ourselves, must, as to *our own Part*, in our Salvation, determine an endless Futurity of the most exalted Happiness, or the profoundest of Misery—If *Experience*, I say, did not clearly evince the contrary, one would think it impossible that *such* a Creature could act so inconsistently with common Sense and Reason, as not to put every Faculty and Ability he hath to the Stretch, to the suiting his Life to so *important an Event*, that so certainly, so knowingly, so undeniably, and so confessedly lies before him.—But however surprizing it is to think it should be the Case, it is plain in Fact, and I appeal to every one's Observation that *bears* me for the Truth of it, That the generality of the World, of the (so called) *Christian* World, within the Reach of their respective Knowledge, think of nothing less than their true *latter End*, as I have from the Authority, and in the Words of the holy Scriptures itself, set it forth.—Or, if they appear to have it at all in their Minds, there is nothing in which they are so ready to delude themselves, as in the *only* proper Method how to secure to themselves a *happy* one.

And that this is no *Obloquy*, or censorious Calumny on the *Age we live in*, I shall make appear by

First, Considering a little what Men generally *discourse* of.

Secondly, by taking a short Survey of the general Tenor of their *Actions*, and consider what they do allow themselves in the Practice of, inconsistent with so *aweful* an *Event*.

Thirdly

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Thirdly, by taking a short Notice of their *Omissions*, what they do *not* do as inconsistently with the great *View* of *Immortality* before them.

A very short Word on each of these *three Points* will clear up the Matter beyond all Exception. And

First, it appears, that the generality of Mankind little think on their *latter End* from the general Tenor of what they entertain one another with in their *Discourse*, or, from the *Use* of that *peculiar Gift* of God to *human Nature* of *Speech* and *Converse*.

Nothing is truer than that *out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh*. And who is there that we ever hear, or in what Company, or at what Time is it, that Men, when they are together, *speak* one to another of their “common eternal Concern,”—“Their great latter “or last End?”—Of their *middle Ends*, of the Things relating to this Life, “What are the *Doings*, or News of “this transitory Scene of Action, Who *misses*, who “attains the *paultry* short-lived *Distinctions* of it?”—“How *Times* are, How *Things* sell, how the Markets *go*, “Scandal and Detraction, Ribaldry and Nonsense, is “often the Subject of Conversation, at home and abroad, “in smaller and in larger Companies, and more or less, “made the Entertainment of all Ages, Sexes and Degrees among us”——But *when* is it, or among *whom*, “The *Issues* of Life,” “our great latter End”, comes into our Thoughts, to be the Subject of our mutual *Intercourse*?——To *comfort* and *cherish* one another in our way through this troublesome Vale to that *heavenly Jerusalem* that lies before us, at the End of it, or to deter one another from deviating from the right Path to it——To *awe* one another by the *Terrors* of the Lord, from the Path that leads to Destruction, and by putting one another in Mind of the *Glory* that shall be revealed, to set one another on, in the Road of being *Partakers* of it.

But would this *Silence* as to this most important of all Points be so, had we our *everlasting Concerns* ever so little at heart, or carried about us the least Sense of the *Dignity* of our *Nature* that *entitles* us to them?

Are we so *silent* in other *Cases*——I won't say in *like Cases*——

Cases — For there is *none like* unto it — But in other Cases of common temporal Concern?

If Men live by the Sea-side, or by the Banks of a River, overflowing its Borders, or, are in any common Danger of having their Houses set on fire — How do they unite all their Wisdom together to keep themselves from being overflowed by the *one*, or devoured by the *other*? — If any Infection any where prevails that threatens Destruction but to their Cattle, what Caution, what Precaution do they not join in to prevent the spreading the Infection to themselves — ? And yet the common Danger of the *Loss* of their *eternal Possessions*, of their being *Angels*, or *Devils* to all Eternity — When is the Time that Men are disposed to make a *common Concern* of that? — Or is it not a Part of a Christian's Business to make any Concern of it at all? — But if it should be a *Pain* to discourse together, on the *dark Side* of the Question — on the *Loss* of an *happy Immortality*, — Why should it not be the highest Pleasure occasionally, to bring into one another's View, and to take a *common Survey* of the Bright-side of our everlasting Nature? To comfort one another with that Glimpse of Heaven and eternal Glory that is held out to us, as *Christians*, in the Books of our holy Religion? — How is it that we can be so ready to speak of what we expect, at any Time, may happen to us that is pleasing in an *uncertain* temporary to *morrow*, and be so silent on what may befall us on an *eternal certain* one? — How can we forbear to comfort one another's Hearts, and making it the principal Entertainment, when we are *together*, (surrounded as we are here with Crosses and Disappointments of all sorts, which no Age or Condition of Man can free us from) to put one another in mind of that which *hangs over every one of our Heads*, “of a Resurrection from the Dead, and a Life “everlasting” (if we ourselves *wilfully* put it not from us) “with God in Glory?”

If all the Glory that hangs over the *sincere Christian* were only as the transitory Gleams of Light that we see sometimes shine through a couple of Clouds, well might

little Notice be taken of it, in *Public* or in *Private*— But when it is interwoven in our very Christian Nature, and is the Subject of our *Creeds* and our daily *Confessions*, at our solemn Times of Worship—How can we bear the Name of *Christians*, Expectants of such great Reversions, without bearing them constantly in mind, and how can we be supposed to do that without occasionally and even frequently rejoicing with one another at the Joy that is set before us from them?—The Heart that is full of Joy is naturally exulting. To suppress the Expression of its *expected Good* is an Interruption of its Happiness—In short, *out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth will be speaking*, and as the great *Futurity* that is grafted on our *temporal Nature* has very little Share of our *mutual occasional Entertainment*, it may very well be supposed, has very little Share of that *Abundance*.

—If from the Use Christian Men make of *Discourse*, we pass on to observe their *outward Actions*, These are so very flagrant, that little need be said of them, to set forth the *intermediate*, low, confined, trifling, impious Ends that (so called) *Christians* take up with, without looking any *further*, or having the least in View their great *latter End*.

That an inordinate Pursuit and Desire after the hungry Gratifications of this World, the fleeting Riches, Honours, and Pleasures of it, has so notoriously engrossed the several Generations and Degrees of Men, and none surely more than the *present*, can only be owing to an Insensibility of the great *Entail* of a *happy Immortality*, would they shew themselves but *worthy* of it.

Temporal Concerns, it must be confessed, are the proper Business of a temporal Creature, and indeed the only proper Business of those that are really such. But how can that *Being* be a *temporal Creature*, or pass with any Propriety under that Denomination, who by the Laws of his Nature, in the original Frame and Constitution of him, is to be an *eternal* one? Properly speaking, to such a Being no State can be *temporary*; Death, which is supposed to make it so, being only a Removal from this, and an immediate Passage into some new Scene of Existence

Existence——Or, at worst, but a temporary *Interruption*, in no sense an *Extinction* of it.

Indeed, for those among us who, as wiser than their Neighbours, renounce all Pretensions to *Immortality*, and value themselves for their high Discernment and superior Acquisitions in the Knowledge of their true Nature, above the vulgar Race of other Men, in proportion as they destroy their Expectations to any thing beyond the transitory Scene they are in possession of——These, indeed, could they do that *in reality*, for themselves, which some of them, with a distinguished Poverty of Mind, are stupid enough to *think* they have done,——could they uneternize themselves they would not be within the Reach of my Argument,——But then also they would be far *beneath* my Notice. An intellectual Creature that has ever *heard* of Immortality, as belonging to his Nature, and renounces the *Expectation* and *Offer* of it, must be the most contemptible and loathsome Being in the great Creation of God.

It is to the short-sighted *unthinking Christian*, and to him *only*, that I would level my Argument——To ask him, “How it comes to pass, that *he*, who by his *Principles* is or ought to be assured of his Pretensions to *Eternity*, no less than of those he possesses in *Time*, can forego the Thoughts of the Honour and Distinction that accrues to him from it?” Or lose, for a Moment, the Enjoyment of that Contentedness of Mind, that Equanimity, that Magnanimity it should naturally inspire, to think himself entitled to an *immortal* State of Being, and any ways rationally entertaining, the humble Hopes of its being a *happy* one——? That he has it in his *Nature*, in some *future Time*, if he could but have it in his *Will*, (if I may be allowed the Use of the Expression *in this Place*) “To tread on Stars, and talk with Gods”——“and that to all Eternity.—

Had some poor Possessor of an Estate at Will, the Title to a Reversion, in a few Years, of a considerable Estate of Inheritance, though himself, perhaps, might have the Enjoyment of it, but a very little while, how would it rejoice him to think how every Year's End

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brought him, or his, nearer and nearer to the Possession of it?—And if his taking possession of such Inheritance, at the Expiration of the Time, depended on any *Condition*—and a *Day* was appointed in the Week for his considering more particularly “how to conform to it”——“Can it be imagined he would suffer it to pass without making due Use of it for that Purpose? Or if he was so foolish as to neglect it, would he not be severely censured for his Folly?—And yet how self-condemned art thou, O Christian, who makest this *right* Judgment in *another's* Case, in a Case so infinitely inferior, and a^cttest so contradictorily to it where it is *thy own*, and that in the highest and most unexampled Degree?

If Men had Heaven and Eternity before them, would it not be Matter of Joy to them, as *Heaven's-day* in the Week came round, and would they rejoice at its coming round, and not take care to be *heavenly-minded* in it?—This Day to a *Heathen* was the *Sun's-Day*, to a *Jew* the *Sabbath-Day*, but to a *Christian* it is, it should be, the *LORD's-Day*, and no other. And why so? But because the Christian's *Lord* and *Master* arose from the Dead on *that Day* to Glory, and was therein the *Forerunner* and *Earnest* of all his faithful Disciples doing so?

Our Pretensions to a *blessed Resurrection* and an *immortal Life* thereon, is the very *Point* that makes us *Christians*—The very *Essence* of our holy Religion, as founded on the *Death* and *Resurrection* of our *HEAD*, and *CHIEF*.—Whose *great* and *only* Errand on Earth was to *secure* the *Possession* and *confirm* the *Expectation* of it, for us, beyond all Peradventure—To dispel the *Morning Twilight Knowledge* of a future everlasting State for *Man*, by Nature, with the glorious Light of HIS *Rising Sun*.

And what can there be so captivating, so enchanting as the Thought of it!—That at the same time we see we are possessed of a short, transient, frail, sickly miserable State of Being, we shall, by the *express Declaration* of Him who has both the Power and Will to bring it about—Exchange it, in his Time, for an *everlasting happy One*!—That it is (as I have already said) the
established

established Order of the GOD of Nature, with respect to the worthy Part of human Kind, that it shall be so! —

This the Christian's LORD's-Day should never fail to put him in mind of. — And if it does not so, — Is there not a great Misuse of it? — Do we not infinitely fall short of acting consistently with our *supposed Belief* in passing it *idly*, or *offensively*, or suffering it to hang on our Hands, when *Eternity* in all its Glory lies before us on it? And is purposely made a *Day of Leisure* to us from our *worldly* Concerns, that we might comfort our Hearts by making our Thoughts dwell on our *eternal* ones.

But not only passing it in a *sauntering Idleness*, or in *unnecessary Business* of this World, is a high Misuse of it, but *frequenting the public Worship of GOD* on it is very little better, when it is not accompanied with a *right Sense* what we have to do when we are *there* — Namely
 “ that we publicly present ourselves immediately before
 “ the *Majesty* of the *Universe* to pay our *public* Homage to
 “ him, to return him Thanks in a most solemn Man-
 “ ner, for the weekly Mercies we receive from his
 “ Bounty, as they arise, humbly imploring the Conti-
 “ nuance of them, to set forth his most worthy Praise,
 “ to humble ourselves before him for our daily Inadver-
 “ tencies and Transgressions, and to accompany such
 “ Humiliation with holy Resolutions to be more adver-
 “ tent for the future, influenced thereto by the Expla-
 “ nation and Enforcement of the holy Law of the *Chri-*
 “ *stian* there given” — In fine, for Christians to
 frame their Souls more and more for the proper Happi-
 nesses of their holy Profession, and to the Practice of the
 Laws of that *Community* they are bred up to be the *eter-*
nal Fellow-Citizens of. —

Should not this be the *Use* Creatures related to Im-
 mortality ought to make of their “coming to Church”,
 and celebrating the *Lord's-Day*? — And is it the or-
 dinary Use made of it? — Or, is it not rather become,
 where the Practice of “so doing” is still kept up to at-
 tend the public Assemblies of Worship, for the most part,
 a Matter of meer *Form, Custom, and outward Decency*?

Often

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Often without indulging the least *preparatory* Thought
 “WHO the GREAT PRESENCE is we are more *expressly* go-
 “ing to wait on, WHAT the *grand Errand* we have
 “with him, and what we ought to do *before-hand* justly
 “to entertain any reasonable Expectation of succeed-
 “ing in it.”

——But how easy is it for many not to “come at all?”——How readily and how frequently are *unnecessary Avocations* taken up with by others, to divert and hinder them from attending the *public Worship* of their CREATOR?——As if it were neither *Privilege* nor *Honour* to be in the *Rank of Beings* endowed with Capacities of *knowing* and *worshipping* HIM; who gave them Being? Or, no *Illustration* of this glorious Privilege *publicly* to unite with others in the Exercise of it?

How would the poor Beasts to whose hard Lot it falls to serve the Purposes——to hale and to carry such Incumbrances on the Earth, as these rationally irrational Creatures rise up in Judgment against them, could they but speak?——But oh what would the *Lord's-day* be to us all if rightly made use of! What an Emblem was it designed for, what a Foretaste might it not be, of Heaven itself?

Let us be, if you please, *Temporalists*, the *six* succeeding Days of the Week, unhappily immersed in the necessary Duties of this Life, but let us take the Yoke off of our Shoulders, and become *Eternalists*, as it comes round, the *First*.

If we think ourselves design'd for *Immortality*, let us do Honour to so exalted a Nature, by living *to it*, and let us husband *that Day in seven*, for that Purpose, which so immediately belongs to the *eternal Reversion* before us. And never see the Light of that Day's Sun, which by the Christian Church is kept sacred, in Honour of its *Head and Master's* Resurrection from the Grave on it, to take Possession of the Joy that was set before him, without considering it, as an Earnest in God's good Time, of our *own*, and every *faithful* Christian's doing the same——And endeavouring to be such, accordingly.

Indeed, it is beyond Expression amazing to see the little Sense Christians have *in our Time*, (and which is every

every Day growing on to be less and less) of this great and glorious *first* Day of the Week. Which is designed us as an *honourable Relaxation* of our *terrestrial* Cares, in order for us to have the Privilege of contemplating our *eternal* ones.

The Application that is now *fashionably* made, either as to worldly Business or Pleasure, by *Great* and *Little*, of the Day appointed for the solemn Worship of their *great* CREATOR seems, in some measure, to be a *voluntary* putting themselves out of his high Protection. It seems to be taking their own present Well-being and the whole Success of their worldly Affairs on *themselves*, as if *their* Endeavours were sufficient to procure it.—— But when Distress and Calamities come on, how will such Men be able to look up to Heaven for Relief, while in their Prosperity they so set up for themselves and held themselves as it were independant of HIM, who gave them Understanding, and Abilities to prosecute their Affairs, and at *whose* high Pleasure every Breath of Wind blows, Drop of Rain falls, Beam of Light shines, (——all which is so subservient, in due Measure, to the Success of their Labour, and to the Pleasure and Happiness and Comfort of their being, *Here*,) as well as He is the Fountain and Foundation of their Expectations, *Hereafter*.

Thus I think it plainly appears, from what Men *do*, and do *not* make the Subject of their occasional *Converse* and *Discourse*.—From the vastly superior Concern they have for the Things of this *transitory* Life over what they have for those of the *other*,—and from the *little* *Regard* they have to that which more immediately *concerns* the *other*, “It plainly appears that their *great* *Later* *End* has very little Share of their *Concern* equal to “the *high* *Importance* of it.”

And this was the *first* Point I proposed to speak to on the Words of my *Text*, namely, to shew, “that “the due and effectual Consideration of our *latter* “*End*, is greatly neglected in the *Ac we live*.”—And I leave every one that has heard (*read me*) to answer to himself for the Truth of my Observation.

I *should* now proceed to shew in the *second* Place, “that it is the highest Wisdom in us all to have ever before our Eyes, OUR GREAT LATTER END, or the Immortal Part of our Nature, as the prime and principal Concern of our Lives, making every other Intention of our Minds and Occupation of our Bodies *subservient* thereto”.—But I hope what I have said will supersede all Occasion of entering into it.

As for You, “my Reverend Brethren”,—*your* Thoughts, so far as you have favoured me with your Attention, must I am sure have gone along with me in what I have delivered, so as to make it perfectly needless to add any Thing, to *you*, and for *your* Sakes, on so clear a Point. And a short Word shall finish what I have farther to say to my Brethren of the Laity.

—And as for *you*, “My Friends and Neighbours,”

“Know yourselves to be *Christians*.—Acquaint yourselves, without Delay, *what it is to be so*—That, as *such*, after this short, miserable, uncertain State of Being is at an End, there *remains* for you a glorious Reversion of an everlasting Existence.” And this on the Word of the GREAT AUTHOR of your Religion, confirmed beyond all Exception by the unquestionable Testimony of his own *Resurrection* and Ascension into Glory.

Acquaint yourselves with HIM, who is your *Head* and *Chief*, under HIS, and *your* heavenly Father; and as *he* endured the Cross, despising the Shame, with Resignation to his fatherly Appointment, for the Glory that *was* set before him, so, do you submit your Wills to his divine Commands and Providence, in doing, and in suffering what he shall require of you, and you shall in God’s good Time be Fellow-partakers of his Joy—You are Sinners, I hear you say,—but “The Acceptance of Repentance in lieu of perfect Obedience is the great Tidings of the Gospel.” See that this be *sincere*, and you are in Possession of its Promises. There is that Honour done to the Understanding of Man by Christ himself, as to assure us there is Joy in Heaven when a Sinner repenteth, and turneth from his evil Ways to the Lord.

—In

—In a Word, do you but carefully see to the Performance of *your Part* in the common Salvation, assigned to, and expected from you, by a careful Use of the appointed *Means*, Consideration, Watchfulness, and Prayer, and you will unquestionably partake of the Benefits of your blessed Saviour's *Intervention*, although you may with the Angels be desirous of *looking into it*, and fail with them of fully comprehending it.

* In short, *confine* not your Thoughts any longer to the Interests, Pleasures and Amusements of *this* transitory State of Being, you are at present in, but extend them habitually to that *immortal* one that lies so assuredly before you.—And though the Affairs, the Business, and even the Amusements of *this* transient State must have your Concern, from the frail Circumstances we are under in it, let that Concern be regulated by the Interests of the *other*.—“Pride yourselves on your *Title to Immortality*,” and then see whether you can confine yourselves to the low finite Pursuits of *mortal* Creatures. Shame should operate on an *ingenuous* Mind, more than Danger itself on a *mean* one. But when the highest Shame and the greatest Danger has place in the Neglect of it, how is it that you can suffer *Eternity*—Your great *Latter End*, to go out of your Thoughts, without leaving its proper Influence behind it, *for a Moment*?—

Set your primary and principal *Affections*, therefore, no longer on *Earth*, but where the *Prize of your High Calling* lieth, *above, in Heaven*. Such as the *End* is, such will be the *Means*.—Thus your *Conversation* will be as becometh the *Gospel of Christ*,—will be *Heavenly*.—Will be in *Heaven*, here, where St. *Paul's* was, and of which holy and happy *Community* he professed himself a *Citizen*, whilst on *Earth*.—His *Immortality* was begun, *Here*, and why should not *Ours* be so too? The *Community*, the *πολιτευμα*, the *Country*, the *Order of Beings*, he thought he belonged to, though on *Earth*, was *elsewhere*, in *Heaven*, because it was from thence he looked for the *Coming of a Saviour*, who should change his *vile Body*, that it might be fashioned like
unto

20 *The IMMORTAL-MORTAL.*

unto his glorious Body, according to the Working whereby he is able to subdue all Things to himself.

And now, what but our wilful Carelessness and Negligence in considering what is, whether we will or no, so certainly before us, our great *Latter End*, and want of giving it its due *Emphasis* on our Minds, in having it constantly before our Eyes, and uppermost in our Thoughts, should hinder Us with the same holy Confidence and Joy, as the *Apostle* had on the Occasion, from carrying about with us, respectively, the same GLORIOUS EXPECTATION!—

And here, My Reverend Brethren, I should have ended, but as I was writing these *last Words*, there occurred to my Reflection a *Passage* of *holy Writ* too apposite to confirm and Grace what I have been very imperfectly laying before you, for Me to lose the *Authority* and *Ornament*; Or, You and Me and All here presents the *Instruction* it contains, viz.

“ Those that sleep in the Dust shall awake,— Some
 “ to everlasting Life, and some to Shame and everlasting
 “ Contempt.— And they that be wise, or, (as it is in
 “ the Margent) Teachers, shall shine as the Brightness
 “ of the Firmament,— And THEY THAT TURN
 “ MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS, as the Stars, for
 “ ever and for ever.”—

T H E E N D.

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